



June 20, 2013

Statement by U.S. Ambassador Lewis Lukens

President Barack Obama and the U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama look forward to traveling to Senegal next week.

The President will reinforce the importance that the United States places on our deep and growing ties with countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including through expanding economic growth, investment, and trade; strengthening democratic institutions; and investing in the next generation of African leaders. The trip will underscore the President's commitment to broadening and deepening cooperation between the United States and the people of sub-Saharan Africa to advance regional and global peace and prosperity.

The President believes that this is a moment of promise for Africa. As we outlined in our strategy toward sub-Saharan Africa released in June 2012, the United States is deepening and expanding our partnership with Africa in four key areas: 1) strengthening democratic institutions; 2) spurring economic growth, trade, and investment; 3) promoting development that creates opportunity; and 4) advancing peace and security.

The President's trip to Senegal will highlight Senegal's place as an African democratic leader, emphasize our strong partnership, and promote continued cooperation to advance economic growth and market reforms. He will meet with members of civil society to recognize the importance they play in keeping a strong democracy; regional chief justices of supreme courts to reinforce the importance of a strong judiciary; and regional stakeholders in agri-business, a driver for Senegal and the region's economic growth.

I know that the dignity and *teranga* of the Senegalese people will shine through during the visit. We are grateful to all that the Senegalese government has done so far in helping us prepare for this visit, and we ask for the patience of Dakar residents as necessary security elements are set up in order to protect the U.S. President as is done for any trip he takes to any country in the world.